(a) whether Government have introduced any reforms in the agricultural sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating therein the benefits accrued after introduction of the reforms; and

(c) if no benefit have accrued, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The reforms carried out in the agriculture sector include liberalization of inter-state movement of foodgrains, promotion of exports of agricultural commodities, greater focus on development of oilseeds and pulses, promoting cropping system approach for increasing crop production, greater access to commodities etc. These reforms have helped in improvement of agricultural productivity and production.

Study by Tobacco Development Council

1451. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tabacco Development Council has done any study on the economic feasibility of conversion of tobacco to other crops; and

(b) if so, when was this study done and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Income from Sale of Passenger Tickets

1452. SHRI JOY NADUKKARA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total income of the Railways by sale of passenger tickets last year;

(b) what is the total income by sale of tickets for journeys to and from Kerala; and

(c) what is the amount spent for the development of Railways in Kerala last year and the total amount spent for all the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) The total income of the Railways sale of passenger tickets last year under:

Year	(Amounts in of Rs.)
1995-96	6124.49

(b) and (c) State-wise information is not maintained in this regard.

Special Support Programme for Small Farmers

1453. SHRI DR.B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have drawn a Special Support Programme for the small farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how these have benefited the small farmers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICUAL-TURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) to (c) The schemes being implemented by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation help the farmers both indirectly and directly. In the former case, the farmers are helped through infra-structural development. In the latter case, there are individual oriented schemes like assistance for weaker sections/women cooperatives, subsidy on transportation of seeds for remote areas and North-Eastern, concessional sale of fertilizers. In addition, subsidy on inputs, demonstrations on farmers' fields, extension training for farmers, subsidy on drip irrigation/sprinkler irrigation are covered under crop oriented and horticulture development programmes.

There are certain area development schemes like national Watershed Development Project in Rainfed Areas, Soil Conservation in River Valley Projects,

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Integrated Watershed Management in the Catchments of Flood Prone Rivers etc. in which individual farmers are benefited through an area development approach.

The schemes benefit various categories of farmers including small and marginal farmers. There is no comprehensive Special Support Programme for small farmers. However, a small Farmer Agri-Business Consortium has been set up to develop agro-business activities, which would provide better returns to small and marginal farmers through backward/forward linkages.

Dislocated Academic Schedules

1454. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to regularise the dislocated academic and examination schedules in the North Indian Campuses; and

(b) if so, whether Government have a comprehensive report on the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) and (b) University Grants Commission (UGC) had circulated a Model Academic Calendar in July, 89 for implementation by universities from the academic year 1990-91. The model academic calendar, inter-alia, provides for a minimum of 180 teaching days every year, last date of admission, last date of completion of examination and declaration of results. UGC has been requesting all universities to adopt the Model Academic Calendar. However, examination schedules are sometimes dislocated due to certain factors beyond the control of the universities, such as natural calamities, law & order situation, agitation, etc.

Establishment of Agricultural Unversity in Kutch Region

1455. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to establish new Agriculture University in Kutch region of Gujarat;

(b) whether any request to this effect from the State Government is pending with the Union Government;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) Question does not arise.

Timings of Shatabdi Express Running Between Bokaro and Calcutta

1456. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that presently one Shatabdi Express is running between Bokaro and Calcutta;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the timings of Shatabdi Express are not suitable from Bokaro Steel City;

(c) if so, whether there is any proposal with the Government to start Shatabdi Express in the morning from Bokaro to Calcutta and in the evening from Calcutta to Bokaro;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ: (a) : Yes, Sir.

(b) : No, Sir.

(c) and (d) : Do not arise.